DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 338 669 TM 017 468

AUTHOR Paredes, Vincente
TITLE Caution: Hazardous Grade. Publication Number 90.26.
INSTITUTION Austin Independent School District, Tex. Office of Research and Evaluation.
PUB DATE Mar 91
NOTE 6p.
PUB TYPE Statistical Data (110) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Attendance; Discipline Problems; Dropout Rate; Enrollment; *Grade 9; Grade Repetition; Graphs; High Risk Students; *High School Freshmen; High Schools; School Districts; Statistical Data; *Student Adjustment; Student Problems
IDENTIFIERS *Austin Independent School District TX; *Transition Time

ABSTRACT

The transition to high school is a crucial time in a student's academic career. This summary is presented as a caution to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the public to warn of some of the hazards of the transition year (grade nine). In 1989-90, ninth-graders in the Austin (Texas) Independent School District had the lowest percentage of passing grades and were the more likely to lose eligibility for extracurricular activities because of failure to pass all subjects each 6 weeks. Enrollment in grade 9 was much higher than projected because of the high retention rate in this grade. In spite of this high enrollment, attendance by ninth-graders is lower than that of other grades and there is a high number of students involved in disciplinary incidents. Data show that ninth-graders do not perform as well as do students in other grades on the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS). In addition, the highest dropout rate occurs in grade 9. One student in four drops out before finishing high school. Parents and teachers must take steps to help ninth graders adjust to the new academic and social demands of high school. Eight bar graphs illustrate grade 9 performance data. (SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED338669

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

F. Holley

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CAUTION: HAZARDOUS GRADE

Vincente Paredes
Austin Independent School District

TM017468

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

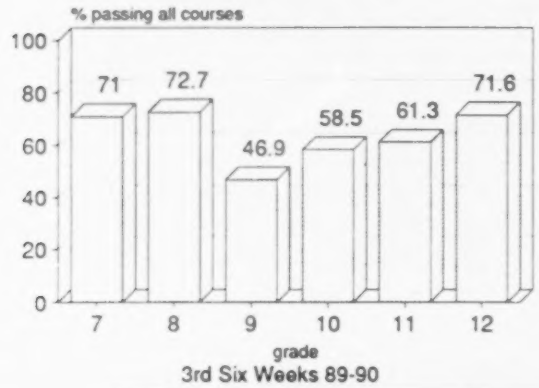
CAUTION: HAZARDOUS GRADE

The transition to high school is a crucial time in a student's academic career. This transition is a time of social and academic adjustment. Many ninth graders are unprepared, unmotivated, or unaware of the potential problems they will face in their high school experience.

The following summary is a caution sign to alert students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the public to some of the hazards of the transition to high school. The hope is that a heightened awareness of these realities will enable everyone concerned to take action in counteracting current negative trends.

There are important issues that must be addressed in looking at how the ninth grade is different from other grades. For example, how do ninth graders compare with students in other grades in terms of successful completion of all classes? In 1989-90, ninth graders had the lowest percentage of passing grades.

Passing Grades



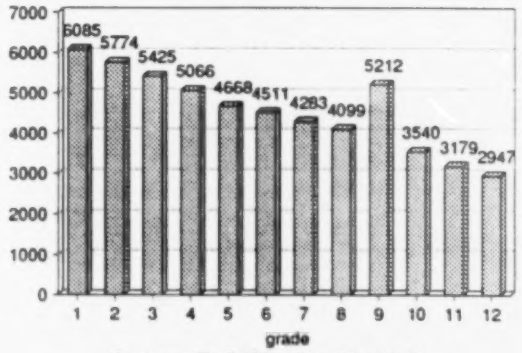
3rd Six Weeks 89-90

More ninth graders than other students lose eligibility for extra-curricular activities because they fail to pass all their courses each six weeks.

How many ninth graders are there in AISD? In 1989-90 there were 5,212 ninth graders. Based upon membership trends, this is larger than the predicted number of about 3,820.

Membership

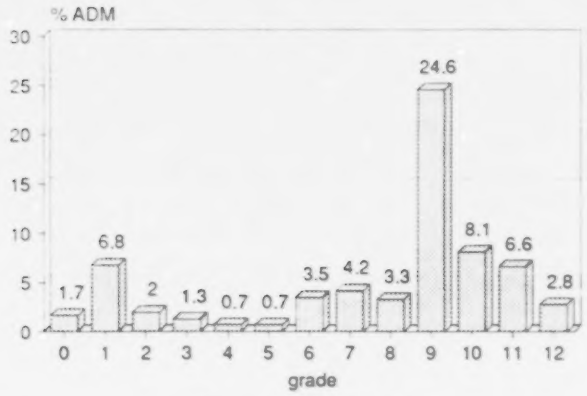
Ninth-grade membership is 36% higher than the membership trend at other grades would predict.



Average Daily Membership 89-90

The high retention rate in the ninth grade accounts for this increased enrollment. In 1989-90, 24.6% (1,140) of all ninth grade students were in the ninth grade for at least a second time, as shown in the figure below.

Retention Rates



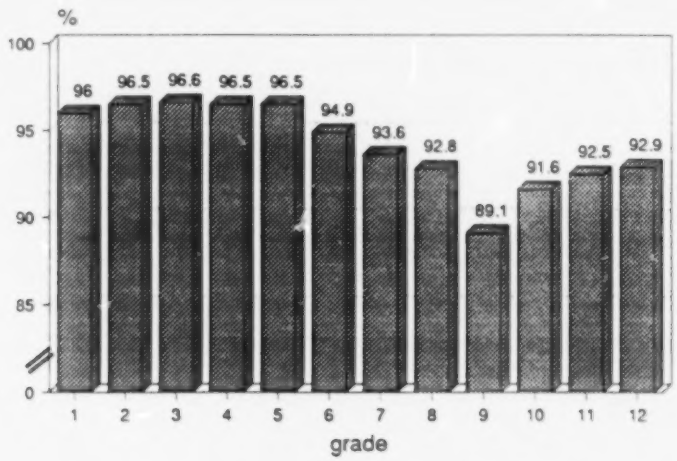
Beginning of Year 89-90

One in every four ninth graders fails to earn the credits required to pass on to the 10th grade.

Although enrollment for ninth grade is higher than expected, ninth graders do not attend school as much as other students. On an average school day, one in ten ninth-grade students is absent.

Attendance

Students in ninth grade attend class at the lowest rate of all grades.

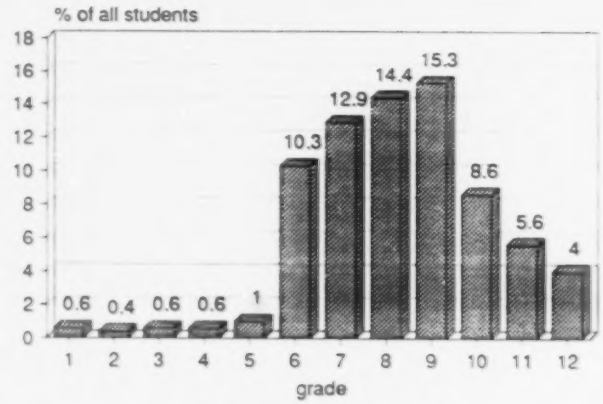


Average Percent Attendance 89-90

The frustrations that students and teachers encounter in the ninth grade is further evidenced by the high number of students involved in disciplinary incidents.

Discipline Incidents

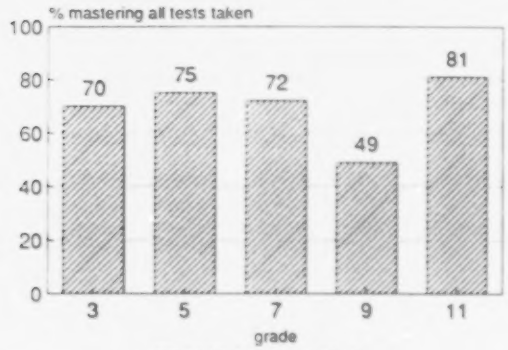
The reported number of students involved in a discipline incident increases dramatically starting in the 6th grade and peaks in the ninth grade.



Students Reported 89-90

In terms of TEAMS mastery, ninth graders do not compare well to other grades.

Mastery on State Tests



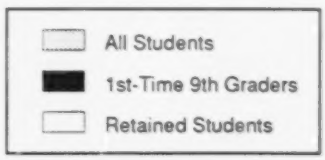
TEAMS Mastery 89-90

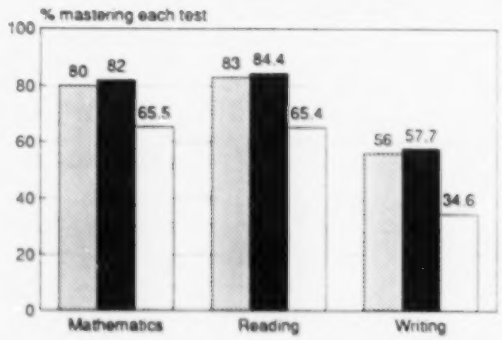
TEAMS results show that ninth-grade mastery is below other grades.

How well do first-time and retained ninth graders master basic academic skills?

Ninth-Grade TEAMS

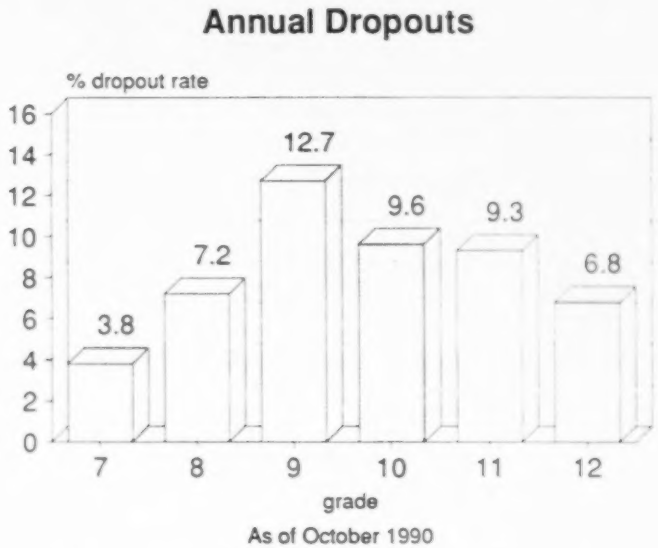
Retained ninth graders master TEAMS objectives at a lower rate than other students.





The dropout rate is the most potent indicator of the hazard of ninth grade. For many students this is the final outcome of the problems that they experience.

The highest annual drop-out rate occurs at the ninth grade.



Although most ninth graders effectively weather the transition to high school and continue on to graduation, many students experience problems that forecast a stormy high school career. One in four students drops out before finishing high school.

Ninth graders experience transition difficulties as a result of problems not solved and skills not acquired in middle school and earlier grades, but more importantly, ninth graders have difficulty adjusting to the new academic and social demands of high school. For example, they may lack the learning skills necessary for a more demanding academic environment. Parents and teachers must take steps to help ninth graders adjust to the unique requirements of high school in order to increase their chances for success.

Austin Independent School District
Department of Management Information
Office of Research and Evaluation

Author:

Vicente Paredes, Evaluation Associate

Dr. Glynn Ligon, Executive Director

Publication Number 90.26
March 1991

BEST COPY AVAILABLE